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California State Senate

SENATOR
SAM AANESTAD
FOURTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT



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CAPITOL AREA FLOOD
PROTECTION

JOINT COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE SUNSET REVIEW

July 6, 2004

The Honorable Ann M. Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
US Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Suite 200A
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Gale A. Norton
Secretary of the Interior
US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Honorable Secretaries:

Over the course of the past few years, California has endured extensive catastrophic fires that have caused immense damage to property and the lives of our residents. Throughout California, we have varied terrain – ranging from heavily forested areas to dry agricultural plots – all of which are ripe fuel for fires if not properly managed. The best approach to eliminate the threat of any fire-based risk or potential for wildfires is proper planning.

An important component of responsible planning is the effort exerted by the local Fire Safe Councils. California is the only state with an established network of over 120 local Fire Safe Councils (FSC) to implement hazardous fuel reduction projects through collaboratively developed County Fire Plans (Community Wildfire Protection Plan). Thousands of acres of fuel reduction have been accomplished, and work conducted by southern California FSC's made significant contributions towards saving lives and property during last year's catastrophic fires.

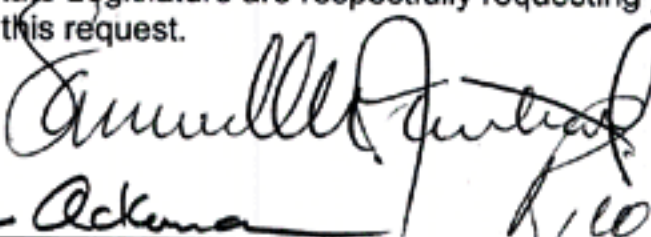
The National Academy of Public Administration in its January 2004 report, Containing Wildland Fire Costs, recognized that the best opportunity to reduce catastrophic fire losses and costs is through a sustainable pre-fire hazardous fuel reduction program. And, the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission recognized that local collaborative efforts, such as community FSC's, need to continue and sustainable funding is urgently needed in California.

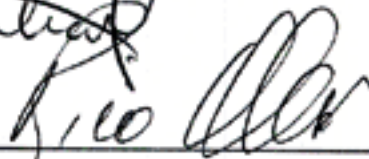
Historically, California has received between \$8-10 million each fiscal year for community Fire Safe Councils. We have been informed that these funds have been

inadvertently excluded from the 2005 fiscal year appropriations measure, and we are respectfully requesting for the necessary language to be reinstated. And, it would help to note the local request for these funds have dramatically increased to over \$40 million. Any additional funds that could be included into the appropriation would be greatly appreciated by local fire safe councils, and the residents of California.

As we approach California's peak fire season, the undersigned members of the California State Legislature are respectfully requesting your favorable consideration and adoption of this request.

Sincerely,

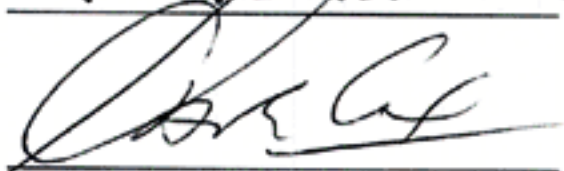

Dick Ackema

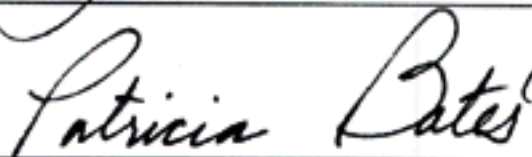

Joe Allen

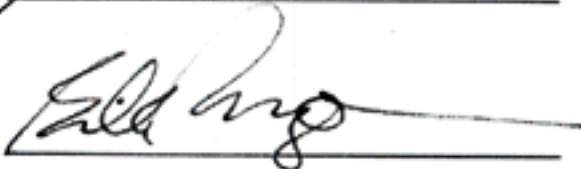

Bob Sutton

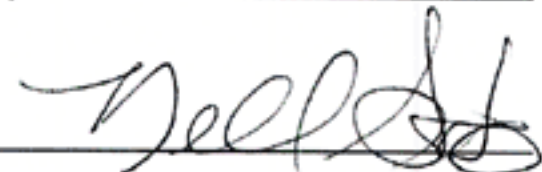

Keith S. Pierce

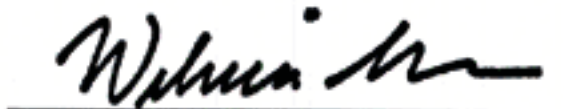

Patricia Bates

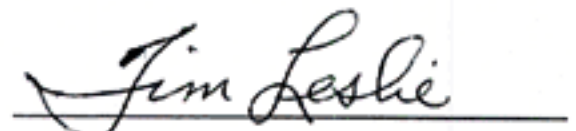

Ed King

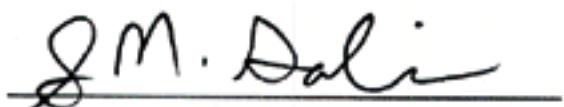

Neil St

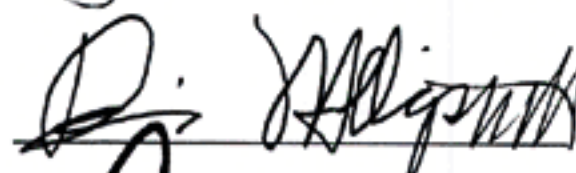

William M

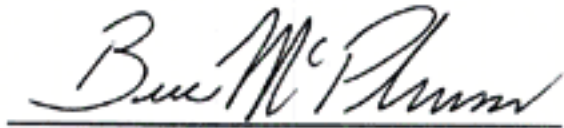

Jim Leslie


J.M. Dali

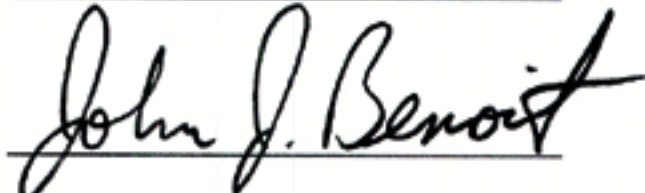

D. Hight


Bruce McPherson


Dave Cybill


John J. Benoit


John J. Benoit


John J. Benoit

Bill Murray Dede Alpert

Christine Kehoe Barbara S. Matthews
